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TRUTH ABOUT HOMŒOPATHY

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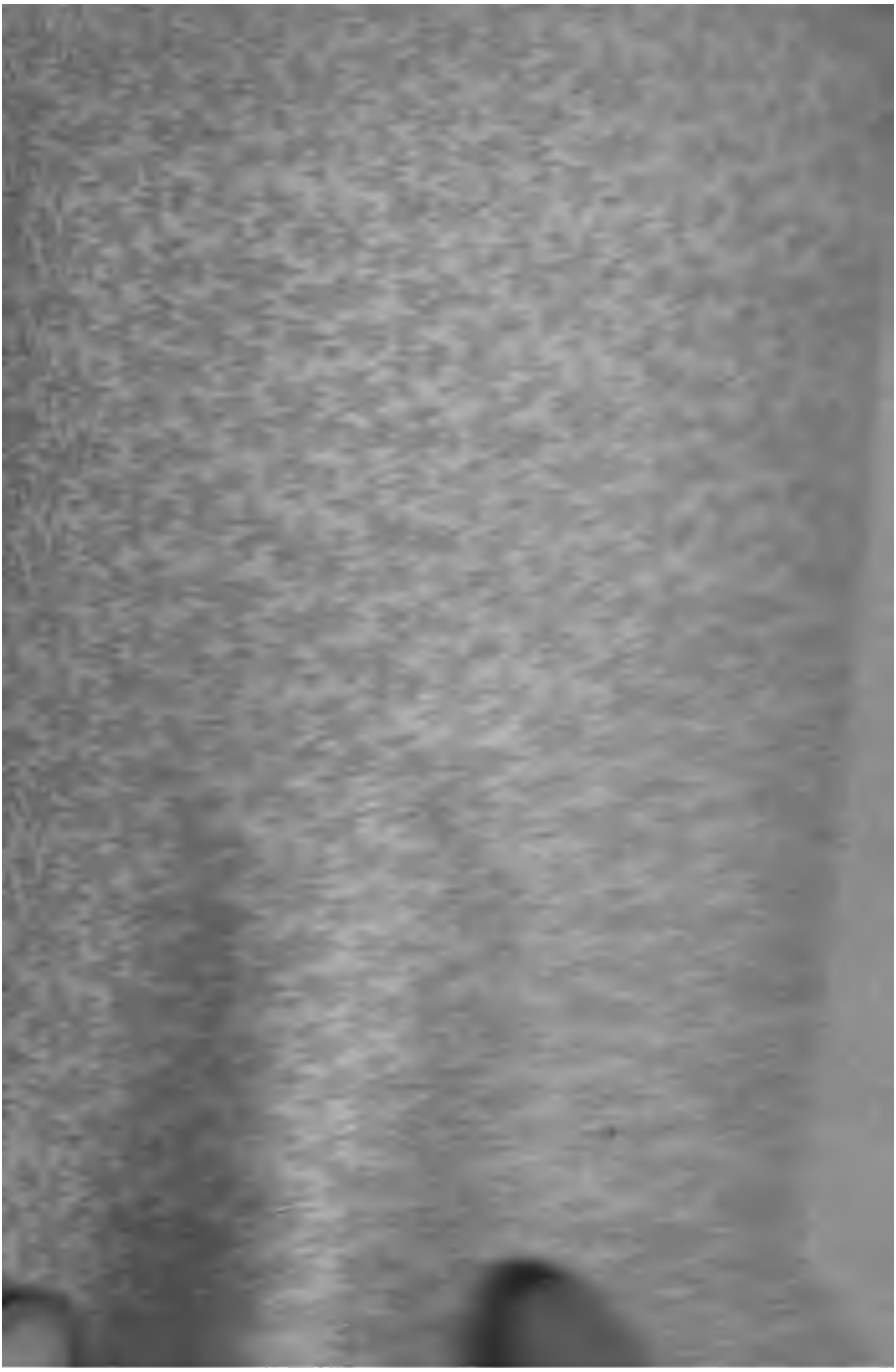

THE

Truth About Homœopathy.

BY

DR. WM. H. HOLCOMBE.

A POSTHUMOUS MANUSCRIPT.

ALSO

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF DR. HOLCOMBE.

LANE L

PHILADELPHIA.
BOERICKE & TAFEL.
1894.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

This, *The Truth About Homœopathy*, is the last literary work done by the late Dr. Holcombe. After his death the manuscript, apparently just completed, was found among the doctor's papers, neatly written and ready for the press. It is written in Dr. Holcombe's inimitable style, and while the text, the "Browning pamphlet," is a most ephemeral one, the real question is a vital one, and Dr. Holcombe's work will possess an interest to all lovers of the truth long after the pamphlet to which it is a reply would have been utterly forgotten but for this little book replying to it.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT HOMŒOPATHY.

Dr. Geo. M. Gould, of Philadelphia, presumably some respectable Allopathic physician of that city, offered a prize of one hundred dollars for the best essay against the Homœopathic theory and practice of medicine. He wanted something clear, strong and practical; which would expose the falsehood and folly of Homœopathic claims; an essay which Allopathic physicians could distribute among their patrons; ostensibly, "to disseminate more enlightened views upon the subject," but really in the trade interest, to bind them more closely to themselves and prevent them from investigating the merits of the new system.

The prize was awarded to Dr. W. W. Browning, of Brooklyn, N. Y. This gentleman sports three distinguished titles on the cover of his pamphlet, A. B. and LL. B., and M. D.—Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws and Doctor of Medicine. It may be fairly supposed that all his attainments in Literature, Law, and Science have been brought to bear upon this one point, the demolition of Homœopathy.

The essay is entitled, "Modern Homœopathy; Its Absurdities and Inconsistencies." I have analyzed this little piece of supposed dynamite and find it to be harmless, except to those who are unfortunately deceived and misled by the statements. I am prepared to show my candid reader that the title of this prize is a misnomer, and that it should have been called: "The Fallacies and

Misrepresentations of Dr. W. W. Browning in relation to Homœopathy and Homœopathic physicians."

The devil's advocate is a queer old legal phrase for a man who detects and exposes the minutest flaw or failing of his opponent, ignores or conceals every good point he may find in him, misrepresents his conduct, misinterprets his motives, and misconstrues everything capable of misconstruction. Partisan editors, lawyers, doctors and theologians frequently play the role of "devil's advocate." Dr. Browning is a brilliant specimen of the species.

From his estimate of Hahnemann, the founder of Homœopathy, one can safely foretell what kind of an exposition an Allopathic writer is going to give him of the Homœopathic system, whether prejudiced and false, or enlightened and liberal. Dr. Browning says little or nothing of Hahnemann but that he was an unsuccessful physician, extravagant in his statements, absorbed in his theories, nomadic in his habits, who died at an advanced age, universally condemned and ridiculed, having acquired neither fame nor fortune. He would leave his reader under the impression that Hahnemann was an obscure, unscientific pretender, destitute of character and ability.

Now let us see who and what Hahnemann really was.

Jean Paul Richter, the illustrious poet and novelist, was his intimate friend, and used to call him "that double-headed prodigy of genius and learning."

Dr. Valentine Mott, the great New York Allopathic surgeon, during his stay in Europe, visited Hahnemann, and held personal intercourse with him. Knowing him better than Dr. Browning, he gave this opinion of him:

"Hahnemann is one of the most accomplished and scientific physicians of the present age."

Dr. John Forbes, a great name in the annals of British Allopathic literature, had a loftier opinion of Hahnemann and his labors than our Brooklyn doctor.

"No careful observer of his actions," says Dr. Forbes, "or candid reader of his writings can hesitate for a moment to admit that he was a very extraordinary man, one whose name will descend to posterity as the exclusive excogitator and founder of an original system of medicine as ingenious as many that preceded it, and probably destined to be the remote, if not the immediate, cause of more important fundamental changes in the healing art than have resulted from any promulgated since the days of Galen himself."

This prophecy of Dr. Forbes, ridiculed by the Allopaths of fifty years ago, is being realized every day. Homœopathy has rendered distinguished services to medical science in general and especially to the Allopathic branch of it. Prof. Bristow, another classic name in Allopathic annals, boldly gives Hahnemann the proper credit of exposing and denouncing the miserable Allopathic theories and practices of that day.

"That he had learning," says the Professor, in an address before the British Medical Association, "and ability and great reasoning power is abundantly clear. He saw through the prevalent therapeutic absurdities and impostures of the day. He laughed to scorn the complicated and loathsome nostrums which even at that time disgraced the pharmacopœias, and he exposed with no like skill and success the emptiness and worthlessness of most of the therapeutical systems which then prevailed.

I commend these true estimates of Hahnemann by Dr.

Browning's superiors and betters to that gentleman's serious consideration. Having such a poor and false opinion of the Master, it is natural that Dr. Browning should have an equally poor and false opinion of his disciples.

"The mass of Homœopathic practitioners," says the prize essayist, "has been recruited from uneducated laymen and unsuccessful physicians. When the schism first made its appearance in this country most of its practitioners were from the common walks of life and with no medical training whatever."

On the contrary, the pioneers of Homœopathy, the physicians who first planted it and watered it in the United States, were uniformly men of scholastic education, high social position, and graduates of the best Allopathic colleges. It was this fact which gave the system the strong hold, which it has never lost, upon the cultivated and wealthy classes in this country. The "uneducated layman and unsuccessful physician" who, witnessing the success of the educated Homœopaths, imposed upon various communities with their box and book, were the quacks, the black sheep of the Homœopathic family, a species immensely represented in the Allopathic household. Injurious as they were to Homœopathy at first, their career was short-lived, and they have passed away forgotten by all but the "devil's advocate" of the Allopathic school, who treasures up every little item of gossip that can be brought to bear against the new system.

The first physician who administered a dose of Homœopathic medicine in the United States was Dr. Hans B. Gramm, who located in New York City in the year 1825. He was a learned professor in the medical de-

partment of the University of Denmark. Having been impressed by some writings of Hahnemann, and being of an independent and inquiring turn of mind, he visited Germany for personal interview with the author of the Organon. He became an enthusiastic convert to his doctrines. Persecuted shamefully by physicians and apothecaries at home, he left Copenhagen in disgust, and planted the banner of Homœopathy upon the free soil of the United States.

The first American physician converted by Dr. Gramm to the New School was Dr. John F. Gray, a young gentleman of brilliant talents, high social position, and a European education. Physicians of similar attainments and the same rank in life, Channing, Hall, Wilson, Bayard and others, followed his example, and the New York Homœopaths became at once what they have continued to be, an ever widening circle of professional ability and social distinction. Dr. Gray enjoyed an immense practice for more than fifty years. The once solitary American Homœopath lived to see four thousand physicians follow in his footsteps.

What is true of New York is true of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Washington and other American cities. Drs Hering, Okie, Hayward, Wesselhœft, Pulte, Verdi and others, who introduced the Homœopathic practice in those places, were without exception men of good professional attainments and social worth, and the first American converts were graduates in medicine occupying honorable positions in society. If Dr. Browning had consulted "Distinguished Homœopathic Physicians and Surgeons," a book published twenty years ago, he would have discovered the fact that the men who fought the first battles for Homœopathy

all over the United States were graduates of the best Allopathic colleges, and frequently men of classical culture. The aspersions of the character, motives, and standing of the pioneer Homœopaths by the adherents of the Old School is the product of inexcusable ignorance or of astonishing malevolence, and generally of both.

The estimate held by the Allopathic profession of Dr. Pulte, the founder of Pulte College, Cincinnati, illustrates the depth of malignity to which the persecution of that day descended. I was a young Allopath practicing in that city from 1850 to 1852, classically educated at Washington College, Va., and bearing the diploma of the University of Pennsylvania. I became very much interested in the reported success of Dr. Pulte in the treatment of Asiatic cholera, and not having the fear of the Faculty before my eyes, as most young doctors unfortunately have, I determined to examine into the claims of Homœopathy. I was warned against Dr. Pulte by my professional brethren as "a Dutch ignoramus, a quack, a humbug, probably a jail-bird." Those were the very words. Well, I studied Homœopathy and got acquainted with Dr. Pulte, with whom my former friends immediately classed me. I found him to be an excellent and honorable physician, a good linguist, a man of well-founded literary pretensions and a gentleman of engaging address and elegant manners. I have ever since seriously mistrusted an Allopathic estimate of a Homœopathic physician.

"Homœopathy," says Dr. Browning, "has been on trial before the world's jury for three-quarters of a century. If half claimed for it by its author had been true it would have displaced all other methods of treat-

ment years ago; but, on the contrary, the system itself is practically dead, the name only survives."

Homœopathy as a system is based upon three fundamental ideas: 1st. That the true, practical knowledge of the action of drugs is to be obtained by experiment on the healthy human system, and by the observation and analysis of cases of accidental or intentional poisoning. 2d. That in the application of drugs to the treatment of disease *Similia Similibus*, like cures like, is the surest, safest and most fruitful principle, rule, or law of cure. 3d. That in treating disease upon this principle very small or even infinitesimal doses of medicine are most efficient. These three ideas, realized and verified by innumerable and ever-increasing facts obtained by observation and experiment, distinguish our Homœopathic system from all others. All ideas are living forces, for good or evil. The three ideas of the Homœopathic school are forces of indestructible vitality and have made Homœopathy what it is to-day in the United States. What is the truth about it?

There are now in this country sixteen Homœopathic medical colleges, with full corps of professors, who teach and propagate the Homœopathic ideas, that Homœopathic system which Dr. Browning says is practically dead.

There are thirty medical journals devoted to Homœopathy and the same ideas.

There are fifty-five Homœopathic dispensaries.

There are forty general and thirty-nine special Homœopathic hospitals.

There are three National societies, thirty State societies, eighty-one local societies and twenty-three Homœopathic medical clubs.

There are fully 12,000 graduated and registered Homœopathic physicians.

Ten million of the people of the United States patronize the Homœopathic system. The figures, indicating the real progress of Homœopathy, have doubled every twelve or fifteen years ever since its first introduction into this country. In another generation or two it will constitute one half of the medical world, professional and lay.

Contrasting these facts with the assertion of Dr. Browning, that the Homœopathic system is practically dead, we may feel assured that whatever else we may discover in the pages of "Modern Homœopathy," etc., etc., we are not likely to find the truth.

Dr. Browning thus continues his little medical romance:

"The considerable number of Homœopathic physicians depend, in part at least, upon the fact that it opens a door of easy entrance into practice. Hence it resists attempts to advance the standard of medical education. The atmosphere of scientific investigation is unfavorable to its growth."

Those who are acquainted with the subject know that these statements are false and preposterous. In proportion to numbers there may be, althought it is improbable, about as many incompetents in the Homœopathic as there are in the Allopathic ranks, but the leaders strive ever after loftier ideals and higher standards. If Dr. Browning will seriously study the Homœopathic Materia Medica, instead of peeping at its pages to make fun of it, he will find that he has undertaken a long, arduous and difficult task. The American Institute of Homœopathy, now numbering about 1,300 members, was the

first national medical organization formed in this country, antedating the Allopathic American Medical Association. This institute, knowing what Homœopathy is and the intellectual attainments requisite for its study, was the first medical body to recommend a great advance in professional education. It was the first to advise preliminary examinations before admission to lectures and a three-years' graded course of instruction, to be extended to four years as soon as practicable. And it is true that several of the Homœopathic colleges adopted these higher standards in advance of their Allopathic competitors.

The average Allopathic doctor may be excused for not knowing these facts, as he never reads a Homœopathic book or journal, and never converses on professional subjects with a Homœopathic physician, and generally knows nothing at all about it. But a prize essayist, professing to have examined the subject for the express purpose of "disseminating more correct views," should not have stultified himself in so careless a manner.

Homœopathic physicians are ready to work heart and hand with the Allopathic profession for the suppression of quackery, the elimination of incompetents, and the elevation of educational standards. But they are unalterably opposed to the creation of medical examining boards which give the Allopathic branch of the profession supreme control within the State, with powers to accept or reject whomsoever they please. These boards, assuming to represent the profession, but really representing only a part of it, have been made, and could always be made, engines of individual oppression, partisan favoritism and medical persecution. One school could thus easily destroy another and appropriate the

spoils. Allopathic physicians have openly declared that the examining boards would suppress Homœopathy by restrictive legislation, every act of which would drive a nail into its coffin. These Allopathic schemes have been thwarted in every great State of the Union, and Homœopathic representation on the board, or, what is better, a separate Homœopathic board, has been obtained from Legislatures which still preserve a decent respect for individual rights and constitutional liberty.

Appalled at the rapid growth of Homœopathy in this country, Dr. Browning, voicing the sentiments of his fellows, finds great comfort in the fact that its march is slow in Europe, or even at times retarded. This is very easily explained. Old conservative communities, in which prestige and precedent, privilege and vested rights are all-powerful, feel the pain of new ideas intensely, and resist with might and main every innovation upon long-established usages and opinions. This is unfortunately true of some of the slowly-progressing or even stationary sections of our own country. There are even here places upon which the beneficent star of Homœopathy has not yet risen. It is not worth while to review Dr. Browning's antiquated statistics and unfair inferences about the status of Homœopathy on the other side of the world. We know that it is gradually advancing in every country in Europe, rising and falling a little in popular estimation with the caprices or prejudices of royalties and nobilities. We are proud and satisfied that it flourishes here. Our own beloved country is the natural flower garden for the growth of every new truth. For here alone is there to be found perfect freedom of thought, speech and action, consistent with the rights of our fellow men, together with an

intelligent and independent spirit of research quite rare in the old world.

Dr. Browning states that Homœopathy has had no scientific or official recognition in the universities, in the military service, or boards of health, etc., etc. If all this were true, it would prove absolutely nothing against the claims of Homœopathy. It would only show that men in power are often arrogant and exclusive, and exceedingly slow to recognize the merits of those who question the infallibility of their opinions and the utility of their methods, and offer something better in their stead. But here, as usual, Dr. Browning's sins of omission and commission are glaring. He struggles hard, but in vain, to impress upon his readers what he imagines to be a fact, that Homœopathy is not advancing and that its further advances are effectually barred.

That Homœopathy is not recognized in Allopathic universities when it has just as good universities of its own is a matter of small import. But it is a matter of congratulation to the New School, and a bitter nut for the Old School to crack, that the States of Michigan and Iowa have officially recognized Homœopathy by establishing Homœopathic professorships in the medical department of their State Universities.

The larger and more intelligent States of the Union have given Homœopathy the strongest official recognition by making liberal appropriations to Homœopathic Hospitals and Insane Asylums, as well as by creating special Homœopathic Boards of Examiners to protect the new system from the impositions and ostracisms of the Allopathic majority. Many Homœopathic physicians have served upon Boards of Health, as pension agents, life insurance examiners, and in other public

capacities. The Government of the United States recognized Homœopathy when the President appointed Dr. Verdi, a distinguished Homœopathic physician, on the National Board of Health, and when Congress made a large appropriation of money to the National Homœopathic Hospital at Washington City.

Is Dr. Browning ignorant of these things? Or does he intentionally conceal them from his readers? There have been many public and official recognitions of Homœopathy besides those above enumerated, and under our American rule of the majority there are destined to be many more. I will relate three of them of special interest as object lessons for Dr. Browning's critical study.

One of the earliest and most striking official recognitions of Homœopathy in this country occurred in the Legislature of Mississippi in 1854. Dr. Frederic Davis, graduate of Pennsylvania University, and the pioneer of Homœopathy in that State, in conjunction with myself, his junior partner, made a notable record in favor of Homœopathy by our successful treatment of yellow fever in the great epidemic of 1853 at Natchez. In consequence thereof the Trustees of the Mississippi State Hospital elected us physicians and surgeons to that institution for the ensuing year, 1854. The Allopaths throughout the State were indignant and sent many protests to the Legislature demanding in the name of the profession (!) the removal of those "irregulars" from a State-endowed hospital. The Legislature sent a committee to Natchez to investigate the matter. The committee reported that the Trustees had elected Drs. Davis and Holcombe to the position by a vote of 12 to 4, on the ground that those gentlemen to their certain knowledge had reduced the mortality of yellow fever from 20

per cent. to 6 per cent., and under the conviction that they could do no better for the poor people, inmates of the hospital, than to give them the physicians whom they believed to be the most skillful and competent, and whom they employed in their own families. The Legislature sustained the Trustees and left us in undisputed possession, thus refusing to recognize the Allopathic school as the regular and only profession having exclusive right to dictate in medical matters.

Some years ago an Allopathic faculty in St. Louis attempted to exclude the students of a Homœopathic college in that city from the advantages of attending the medical and surgical clinics in the city hospital. The Homœopaths claimed the right to those advantages on the ground that the Homœopathic taxpayers of St. Louis paid an immense amount toward the support of its charitable institutions. The City Council supported the Homœopathic claim to equal rights in a public hospital. The Old School faculty indignantly resisted and threatened to resign in a body. A legal friend of the faculty sounded the members of the Council separately, and discovered that, although few of them had any Homœopathic preferences, a large majority were so fixed in their ideas of equal rights and justice to both parties that they would accept the Allopathic resignations and appoint a whole Homœopathic staff in their places. Terrified at such a prospect, the Allopathic faculty withdrew from their position and admitted the Homœopathic students to their lectures.

A bill was brought not long ago into the Legislature of Minnesota providing for the establishment of a hospital for the treatment of the insane on Homœopathic principles. It was tabled or voted down. At a subse-

quent session the Homœopaths came forward with the same bill, and with documentary evidence and unimpeachable statistics which showed the surprising fact that one-half of the money paid into the treasury of the State came from the friends and patrons of the Homœopathic system, which our prize-essayist believes to be "practically dead." An appropriation of $300,000 was easily secured.

Cannot Dr. Browning and his associates see in these little straws which way the wind blows? Have they estimated the significance of popular opinion and popular majorities outside of our little medical rings? Do they not know that the American people are so imbued with the spirit of liberty, and the doctrines of equal rights and fair play, that they will never knowingly give a majority of medical men the power to trample upon a minority of their fellows, equally educated, equally respectable, equally honored, and trusted? Do they not foresee that the growth of Homœopathy among the people, especially among the intelligent and wealthy classes, will finally put the Homœopathic school into possession of hospitals, dispensaries, asylums, boards of health, pension agencies, etc., which have hitherto seemed safe from its encroachments? Can they not divine that far off but sure event, that in relation to Homœopathy the Allopaths have but this alternative, to swallow it or be swallowed by it?

Very lately a Homœopathic committee applied to the Surgeon-General of the U. S. Army and the Attorney-General of the United States for an exact definition of the term "regular physician," of which class the medical men of the army and navy must consist. The official answer was this: A regular physician is one who has

been educated at a regularly chartered medical school in which all the branches of medical science are taught and a three-years' graded course of instruction required. There is, therefore, no legal obstruction to the admission of Homœopathic physicians into the army and navy. Their rejection is based upon the personal prejudices, and, I may add, the professional ignorance of the examiners. There are ten million Homœopathists now in the United States. When thirty millions, a generation hence, thunder at the doors of Congress demanding Homœopathy in the army and navy, is it likely that the frantic expostulations of interested Allopaths will arrest the movement?

These people object seriously to the terms Allopathy and Allopaths, but we cannot withdraw them. They profess to despise "pathics" and exclusive dogmas. They consider themselves the Medical Profession, the regular, rational, legitimate heir to the wisdom of all the ages. They are egotistically mistaken. The wisdom of all the ages is common property, and the best medical wisdom of the present age they have foolishly refused to appropriate. A system or organization which excludes Homœopathy and Homœopathic physicians is narrow, sectional, dogmatic, and exclusive with a vengeance. It is a big "pathy" with dogmas excluding other dogmas. Allopathy is just as good a name for it as the very imperfect name of Homœopathy is for our school. Hahnemann first dubbed the Old School with the titles Allopath, Allopathy. Some word was necessary to distinguish them from other systems growing in importance. The popular mind has adopted it. Every man in search of Old School treatment asks for an "Allopathic doctor." The greater States, New York and Pennsylvania, for in-

stance, have legalized it by appointing three distinct medical examining boards, Allopathic, Homœopathic and Eclectic. The name is yours, gentlemen, Allopathic! It sticks to you like the shirt of Nessus. You, the medical profession, forsooth! The genuine medical profession is all-embracing, excluding no shade of thought, demanding of its members only education and honorable character. That profession like the true church of God is at present invisible, and yet every brave, liberal, honest, big-hearted, wide-minded physician belongs to it. I have met many such in the Allopathic school, but they were not of the Browning type.

I must take a little more benevolent trouble to correct the teachings of this pamphlet as to the status of Homœopathy and Homœopathic physicians. With his limited knowledge and his prejudiced range of thought, the author intimates that Homœopathy is quackery and Homœopathic physicians are charlatans. It would be well for him to remember the fate of an Allopathic doctor in the State of New York who denounced a young Homœopath located in his neighborhood as a quack. He was brought before a court of justice on the charge of insult and abuse. The case turned upon the definition of quack, and the applicability of that definition to the plaintiff. The quack is an ignorant pretender to knowledge. The young Homœopath produced his certificates and diplomas, proving that he had received a good classical and medical education. A quack is a boastful advertiser of his own merits and capabilities. The young doctor had announced his business in a modest and unpretending manner. The quack is a vender of secret medicines and nostrums. The plaintiff secreted nothing, deceived nobody. He invited investi-

gation, and was ever ready to explain his system and his measures to those who wanted information. The definition was exhausted: it did not fit the case; the Allopath was guilty of insult and abuse. The judge imposed a heavy fine upon him and administered a severe and well-merited rebuke.

Every Allopathic writer against Homœopathy, Dr. Browning included, nettled by the decided preference shown by mothers and ministers of the gospel for Homœopathic treatment, has quoted Oliver Wendel Holmes' sneering remark on the subject: "Charlatanism," says the venerable author of "Elsie Vennor, the Snake-Woman," "always hobbles upon two crutches, the tattle of women, and the certificates of clergymen." It's a pity that Allopathy doesn't hobble upon the same crutches. Who are more likely to note well the practical differences between two treatments than the mothers and matrons who nurse the sick and the intelligent pastors who visit them in their affliction? What more capable, truthful and trustworthy witnesses could we desire in behalf of the Homœopathic cause?

The same venerable author of "Elsie Vennor, the Snake-Woman," romanced a good deal about Homœopathy in his younger days. When it first made its appearance in Boston he expended some inferior prose and some doggerel poetry upon it. He even recklessly assumed the role of prophet, and predicted that in forty years the "fad" would have expired, and not a Homœopathic physician would be found in the United States. On precisely the fortieth year after that prediction the American Institute of Homœopathy, representing at that time several thousand Homœopathic physicians, and an ever-increasing Homœopathic public, held its annual

session in the city of Boston under the very nose of the illustrious prophet, for he is, outside of medicine, truly a great man. The city gave the Institute an official recognition, appropriating several thousand dollars for a splendid banquet, at which the Mayor presided, an honor never before nor since extended to a medical society.

At the present day there are more than a thousand Homœopathic physicians in the State of Massachusetts. On a late occasion when a call was made for some large additions to the Homœopathic hospital in Boston nearly $200,000 were contributed by the city and State, and $350,000 were raised by private subscriptions. O, intelligent Bostonians! O, astute New Englanders, foremost in the march of progress, how could you be so befooled and humbugged? Homœopathy is practically dead, nothing but the name survives! Dr. Browning has declared it! How can you doubt it? Those so-called Homœopaths are Allopathic doctors in disguise! The patients of those alleged Homœopathic institutions are cured by strong Allopathic medicines concealed in Homœopathic sugar! Let Dr. Browning, A. B., LL. B., M. D., extract your mental cataracts! Repudiate those fellows sailing under false colors! Henceforth employ only recognized Allopathic doctors with the regular, official ear-mark! Pour your money henceforth into genuine Allopathic treasuries!

"Upon the shelves of the world's great libraries," says Dr. Browning, "is not to be found a single standard volume of scientific merit written by a Homœopathist."

This bombastic utterance translated into the simple language of truth means only this: the faculties of Allopathic colleges have excluded from their libraries the nine hundred volumes of Homœopathic literature, some

of them of great scientific merit. Medicine is so little of a science, such a rope of theoretic sand, so uncertain, so changeable, that a medical book, especially an Allopathic book, fifty or even thirty years old, is out of date and out of print, an anachronism, a fossil, a mummy, fit only for a museum of curiosities. The "great libraries of the world" have no room for such rubbish.

Our prize-essayist exultingly declares that the Homœopaths have had no hand in all the great medical discoveries of the age. Does he mean Koch's Tuberculin, which flared up like a rocket and came down like a stick? Homœopaths recommended and employed the tubercular bacilli under the very same name when Koch was a little school-boy; and they are using Homœopathic preparations of it now, while the Allopaths, not knowing how to manage these things wisely, have dropped it altogether. Does he mean Pasteur's great Homœopathic discovery of the cure of hydrophobia by inoculating with the poison of the mad dog? Hering and other Homœopaths used the same poison in hydrophobia and kindred nervous affections when Pasteur was a baby. Does he mean Brown-Sequard's "Elixir of Life," and Hammond's extension of the idea of the injection of animal juices for the restoration of jaded vitality? Schüssler, a distinguished Homœopathic physician, anticipated and utilized the idea in a far more practical and fruitful manner. He has added to our materia medica a number of tissue remedies, based upon animal chemistry, aiming to restore health by supplying the normal mineral elements which are found wanting in certain tissues and organs of the body in various diseases.

The comparatively few Homœopathic physicians in

the short life of Homœopathy as a system, still less than one century, have had their hands full in the creation of a new materia medica and the application of it by a new law to the cure of disease. If they were not found in the laboratory in pursuit of chemical and biological discoveries, it was because the discoveries of Hahnemann had put them upon the track of far more direct and useful labors for the benefit of mankind. They have accumulated facts and established principles, which, like the pure mathematics, are fixed and permanent. None but those who have grasped the real significance of the Homœopathic materia medica and its superb possibilities, can appreciate this statement. The Homœopaths of this century have really done more for the cure and eradication of disease than all the Allopaths have done in the last three hundred years. Even vaccination, which has almost exterminated small-pox, is a Homœopathic prophylactic, which has made many converts to the law of similia similibus.

The advances in surgery, gynecology, and hygiene have been truly wonderful, but they are matters about which there is no dispute, and the common property of all schools of medicine. In the field of practice, clinical work, the Allopaths have made no great advances. One theory, one remedy after another have been announced with a blare of trumpets and dismissed with a growl of disappointment. Their true progress has been in the abandonment of old theories and practices, and the occasional acceptance of a Homœopathic remedy in a moderately small dose, claimed always as a new discovery, but to Homœopathic knowledge as old as Hahnemann. Every honest Allopath will confess that his treatment of all the severe diseases, pneumonia,

typhoid fever, scarlet fever, diphtheria, small-pox, yellow fever, Asiatic cholera, etc., etc., is still in the experimental stage, with no fixed rules or principles, and with about the same mortality from them which was recorded fifty years ago. This mortality may be modified a good deal if the doctor has sense enough, as many of them now have, to trust more to nature, or to use some Homœopathic remedy (in too large a dose always) recommended by Ringer, Phillips, Brinton, Shoemaker, Aulde, or some other Homœopathic-Allopath.

Having established Dr. Browning's ignorance of the the real status of Homœopathy and Homœopathic physicians in the United States, I proceed to the easy but disagreeable task of showing how little he knows of the system from a medical standpoint, what it really means, what ground it covers, what ground it does not cover, and what is reasonably to be expected from its practitioners.

"Modern Homœopathy" is a misleading title for this prize-essay, intended "to disseminate more enlightened views." Young as Homœopathy is it has an antiquated side to it, the views and opinions of Hahnemann and his earliest disciples. This ancient Homœopath, dead for forty years, its ghost only surviving, is the theme of Dr. Browning's discussive genius. Pathology, as we understand it, was not born in Hahnemann's young days; the microscope had not discovered the acarus; the doctrines of the vitalists still prevailed in medical circles. Yet Dr. Browning dilates with unction upon Hahnemann's exploded theories of the vital force and spiritualized drugs, and suppression of the itch as the cause of many chronic diseases, as if these things had any rela-

tion to the practical Homœopathy of the present day. He knows perfectly well that Homœopathy means something more than little doses; that castor oil and calomel given in full doses are Homœopathic prescriptions; and that not one in ten of the Homœopaths of the present day prescribes the "higher dilutions;" and yet he expends his mental force and mathematical talent in trying to make infinitesimal medicine ridiculous, not agreeing with Max Müller, that "nature's greatest works are achieved by her least forces, and man should be proud to imitate her example."

Of modern Homœopathy, the Homœopathy which confronts the Allopathic school with all modern improvements and appliances, and with its own rich, new materia medica superadded, its physiological provings, its growing literatures, its praallel between pathogenesis and pathology, the therapeutic law with its acknowledged successes and latent capabilities, of this modern Homœopathy, Dr. Browning has but a feeble conception. He gives a list of nine books he had consulted to prepare himself for his great undertaking. Four of these are Allopathic works, three of them written by rancorous enemies, from whom he obtained his presumed facts. The five others, even including Hahnemann's "Organon," were not calculated without an instructor to give him the information he needed. I will generously furnish him with a better list of books, which will enable him to correct his errors and to greatly enlarge his professional range of thought. If he thinks he "knows it all," as is probable, and disdains my offer, it still may prove useful to some of the many good Allopathic doctors who will read these pages.

"Lectures on Homœopathy," by Dr. Dudgeon, of the London Hospital College.

"Text-Book of Homœopathy," by Dr. Wm. Grauvogel, one of the greatest Surgeons in Chief in the Prussian army.

"War, Cholera and the Ministry of Health," by Dr. John Garth Wilkinson, who Ralph Waldo Emerson said was the greatest man he met in Europe, "with a long Atlantic roll of thought."

"Organon of Homœopathy," by Dr. C. J. Hempel, the intimate friend of Michelet, whom he assisted in the publication of his great "History of France."

Arndt's "System of Homœopathic Medicine," in three large volumes, an admirable collection of monograms on diseases by the best physicians.

"Cyclopedia of Drug Pathogenesy," four large volumes, by Drs. Hughes and Dake, the original materials drawn from toxicology and provings from which the Homœopathic Materia Medica is elaborated.

"Condensed Materia Medica," by Dr. Constantine Hering, himself a condensed encyclopedia of learning. When he was a young physician he was invited to expose the fallacies of Homœopathy in a medical review, but his examination of it made him an enthusiastic convert. He had better, perhaps purer, eyes than Dr. Browning.

Hughes's "Materia Medica," the very thing for Allopathic inquirers.

Dr. Carroll Dunham's "Lectures on the Homœopathic Materia Medica."

Farrington's "Clinical Materia Medica."

Helmuth's "System of Surgery."

Ludlam on "Diseases of Women."

The last five volumes are text-books in the Homœopathic colleges, written by men who had and have no superiors in their special lines of work. Here is modern Homœopathy, or a part of it, for this list could be greatly enlarged by books of staunch and enduring merit. If any man will study these books, with the sincere and liberal spirit of one seeking the truth, or if he will even examine them carefully, and still remains of Dr. Browning's opinions regarding the New School and its adherents, he is either a bundle of irrational prejudices or a mental imbecile.

In a pamphlet, "What is Homœopathy?" I defined the system in terms which met the approval of the entire prosession. I repeat it with a few slight changes:

"Homœopathy is a part of medical science. It is not medicine, but a reform in one of its departments. It has no new anatomy, or chemistry, or physiology. It has no new obstetrics, or surgery, although it has made great improvements in the medical treatment of surgical and obstetrical cases. It has no new pathology, or hygiene, or sanitation. It shares all these things with the Allopathic school. Its sphere is therapeutics; its work a new application of medicines to diseases. And even then it relates only to the dynamic or vital action of drugs, leaving all other points of practice open questions. It utilizes the sciences of toxicology and pathology in a manner impossible before the discovery of the law, *Similia Similibus*. In fine, it discards nothing in medical theory or practice except when it can put a better thing in its place."

If Dr. Browning had really understood what modern Homœopathy is, he would not have expressed his absurd surprise that we provide ourselves with the best

Allopathic books and journals, and use antiseptics, hypodermic syringes, anæsthetics, antipyretics, or anything else which can contribute to the relief or cure of our patients, and that we endeavor in every way to keep close up with the spirit and progress of the age. We never pander to the preferences or prejudices of patients, but prescribe according to our knowledge and sense of duty. Our patrons all understand our position, and honor and respect us for it. The fact is, we are just as truly regular, rational physicians as any Allopaths, and we differ from them only in having had the good sense and the courage to adopt the Homœopathic principle which we apply with superior success to more than half of the entire field of medical practice

It is strange to see how Dr. Browning misunderstands or perverts the words of Hahnemann. He quotes this sentence: "The totality of the symptoms (by which the remedy is selected) consists entirely in the complaints of the patient and the morbid changes in his health perceptible to the senses"—a most compact and philosophical definition — and goes right on to charge Homœopathists with ignoring pathology and all the instruments of scientific diagnosis. Now for the truth. The Homœopath listens to his patient's complaints, lets him tell his story in his way, and attaches what importance he sees fit to this or that statement. Then he proceeds to the second and most important part of the examination, to ascertain by the use of his own senses (not by hypotheses or speculations on the data given him by the patient) the real morbid changes which have occurred. He examines the pulse and the tongue, and he uses the clinical thermometer, the chemical reagent, the stethoscope, the microscope, the speculum, or whatever

intermittent fever. That experiment was the birth of Homœopathy, and it has grown and expanded ever since on the ground of rigidly conducted experiments and carefully recorded observation. The theoretic attempts to explain the Homœopathic cure are afterthoughts, and must be kept absolutely distinct from the strictly scientific evolution of Homœopathic practice. The mariner does not discard his compass, because he cannot comprehend the mystery why the magnetic needle points always to the north pole.

But, cries Dr. Browning, quinine does not produce intermittent fever.

Dr. Warren Stone, a far greater man than Dr. B., and a good Allopathic, too, used to say to his medical class: "Gentlemen, when you have cured your intermittent or remittent fever with quinine, do not continue the remedy too long. You will reproduce the disease, and you will not be able to distinguish between the fever of cinchonism, which you have created, and a periodical return of the malady."

Dr. Browning cites Allen's Encyclopædia of Pure Materia Medica as one of the books he examined when obtaining his profound knowledge of Homœopathy. I wonder if he noticed that Allen's Materia Medica is in ten immense octavo volumes and in close print besides. I wonder if he gave Dr. Allen and his assistants any credit for the herculean labor and industry required for the undertaking, or asked himself if quacks and impostors were often engaged in such intellectual work. I wonder if he did not whisper to himself, can the Homœopathic system be really dead when a publisher and purchasers can be found for such a gigantic affair, a Materia Medica costing sixty dollars.

Whether he did these things or not he was careful to take out of that Materia Medica only some of its lightest chaff for the amusement of his readers, some of the fantastic, trifling, or imaginary sensations of the proving of drugs for ridicule, leaving the pure, good wheat undiscovered or unnoticed. That Materia Medica contains the pure wheat, the scientific basis, the solid material for a specific and alterative medication which will revolutionize the practice of medicine. Dr. Browning flippantly discards it all as puerile and unworthy of the attention or study of the regular and rational (?) physician.

How differently speaks a great French Allopathic authority, Dr. Renouard, in his standard work, "The History of Medicine."

"What can we answer," he writes, "when these Homœopaths say to us:

"'The most efficacious means possessed by the healing art, viz.: Specifics, which according to common consent produce the mildest, promptest and most durable cures, are proscribed by your official medicine as much as possible. It excludes them from its theory if not from its practice. We, on the contrary, come to teach you a means to discover and a method to employ these admirable instruments of cure.'

"What have we to respond to such an argument as this? Nothing, positively nothing serious and logical."

Chomel, another illustrious French Allopath, once gave his own party some excellent advice, which Dr. Browning would do well to follow when he contemplates another Quixotic tilt against Homœopathy. He will probably discover, what he does not now seem to know,

that in his first raid he broke his lance against a windmill of his own imagination.

At a meeting of the French Academy of Medicine, Dr. Tessier, in charge of the Hospital S. Marguerite, offered a report on the treatment of pneumonia in his wards with Bryonia and Phosphorus at the 6th dilution, with a remarkably small percentage of death. While he was reading the members gave unequivocal signs of astonishment, incredulity and suppressed indignation. When he had finished, many men sprang at once to the floor with cries of Homœopath ! Homœopath ! Traitor ! Charlatan ! and demanded his immediate removal from the hospital and his expulsion from the academy. In the midst of the storm Chomel, the oldest and the most illustrious member of the academy, arose to his feet and waved his hand. His great reputation and his venerable appearance commanded regard and inspired silence on the assembly, when he spoke to this effect:

"Gentlemen: Dr. Tessier is an educated, respectable physician, a member of this academy; he has exercised his undoubted right of experimentation. If experimentation with new remedies upon novel principles is to be prohibited you may as well close every hospital in France. Dr. Tessier has a right to be heard and to have his paper respectfully discussed. The only scientific way of treating this matter is for you to report Dr. Tessier's experiments in similar cases with the same remedies and make your reports, which will either verify or refute his statements."

Golden words were these ! Chomel's influence was so great that his counsels prevailed, at least in part and for a time, Dr. Tessier's report was silently accepted and he was left in charge of his hospital.

I had prepared a list of Homœopathic remedies and stated the diseases to which they were adapted, the honest trial of which would convince any rational man of the truth of the Homœopathic law, and I was going to advise Dr. Browning to make the experiment—but I mercifully forbear. I cannot tempt Dr. Browning to his professional destruction. The Allopathic profession has committed itself so rashly, so violently against the claims of Homœopathy that no candid and honest investigation of them is possible. Let Dr. Browning try it, and he will feel the tyranny of professional opinion and the lash of party discipline. A willing slave is not a slave; but let Dr. B. assert his freedom and he will feel his chains. Let it be whispered that he is giving Homœopathic medicines to his patients, and his brethren will denounce him as a crank or a quack. They will impugn his motives and assail his reputation. They will alienate his friends, destroy his business, cast him out of their assemblies, and crown him with that crown of martyrdom which has graced so many Homœopathic brows in the last half century. Unless Dr. Browning is made of heroic stuff he had better keep on the even tenor of his way under the golden auspices of official medicine.

The last sentence I shall quote from Dr. Browning's prize-essay is one of peculiar untruthfulness.

"Homœopaths have never proposed such a test (one of scientific exactness), but, on the contrary, have resisted the repeated attempts on the part of the regular profession to secure an impartial investigation of their doctrines, comparative or otherwise. No sooner had Hahnemann announced his alleged discovery than it was

thoroughly tested in every medical centre of the world, and its worthlessness thus early demonstrated."

These statements are so atrociously false that I shall insist that Dr. Browning was imposed upon by partisan zealots and devil's advocates, and shall refuse, for the honor of the American medical profession, to believe that he was conscious of the enormous lie he was uttering.

The only specimen of these magnificent and thorough investigations (?) which Dr. B. adduces, isthe series of experiments made by Andral nearly sixty years ago. That whole matter is fully exposed in the 3d Vol. of the British Journal of Homœopathy. London Homœopaths went over to Paris and carefully examined the hospital records. Of the hundred and thirty alleged cases, less than sixty could be found. The large majority of these were old, chronic and incurable diseases. . The result in a few instances was reported favorable, in the rest negative. But now for the wonder of wonders every patient received but one dose of medicine, which was never repeated whether the case, acute or chronic, lasted days, weeks or months. And in every instance the remedy was badly chosen, not Homœopathic to the symptoms, so that the prescription would have disgraced any tyro in Homœopathy. Andral's experiment, of which the Allopathic profession have made so much capital, was a frivolous, monstrous, pitiable farce.

Dr. Renouard, the best historian of medical science, thus cautiously speaks of Andral's experiments, having evidently never heard of "the thorough tests which were made in every medical centre of the world:"

"It is true that a long time ago some experiments were made, but these experiments, now almost for-

A SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF DR. HOLCOMBE.

Dr. Wm. H. Holcombe was born in Lynchburg, Va., May 29th, 1825. His father, Dr. Wm. J. Holcombe, was a physician of high standing, endeared to the community by his spotless integrity and his noble and charitable life. His mother, a member of the Warwick family, was a woman of unusual mental and moral qualities. Although an invalid for fifty years, she trained a family of six sons in an exemplary manner, and always exercised the most inspiring influence over them.

Dr. Holcombe's childhood was spent in the quaint brown house, with its terraced garden sloping down to the placid waters of the James; here he grew and expanded in an atmosphere of sincere and simple piety. His scholastic training was received at the hands of Peter Nelson and John Cary, two of the best Greek and Latin scholars of the time.

When he reached the age of seventeen his parents, convinced of the evils and dangers of slavery, emancipated their own bondsmen, refused to accept a valuable legacy of slave property, and started on a long and wearisome journey to the west. Indiana was the new

medical creed as a valuable addition to professional thought and practice, and every man had been allowed perfect freedom of opinion about the subject, there never would have been any schism. But the attitude of the profession towards Homœopathic ideas was hostile and intolerant from the beginning, and seems to become more and more so with the growth and success of the system. They exclude us from a profession which Homœopathy has enriched, and which many of its disciples adorn. We cannot proclaim our discoveries in their journals nor discuss our victories in their societies. We are denied consultation and are ignored by a conspiracy of silence. It excites the astonishment of liberal and intelligent men outside of medical circles. The best and noblest Allopathic physicians deplore this state of things, which is perpetuated by the ignoble and mediocre, who always constitute the majority.

In the meantime our conviction that we are in possession of truths of incalculable importance to the profession and to mankind is deep and ineradicable. These truths have become solemn responsibilities in our hands. It is our lofty mission to teach, to prove, to propagate them. We must have schools, journals and hospitals for that purpose, which involves a separate organization. We accept the situation, not without regret, but with righteous determination. We *must* and *will* float the flag of Homœopathy until it is known and respected throughout the world, until the whole medical profession shall recognize its merits and do justice to us and honor to itself by adopting our principles and practice. Then, and not until then, will the Homœopathic lamb lie down in peace with the Allopathic lion. The slow but inevitable and progressive evolution of the human mind will bring it to pass.

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land of promise to which they directed their steps, and over the montainous routes and level plains the little cavalcade wound its way, only to find the pioneer life uncongenial, the surroundings wholly unsympathetic. The out-door life led here by young Holcombe strengthened his physique and enabled him to return with increased ardor to his classical studies, which were pursued first at the Washington College, Lexington, Va., and afterwards at the University of Pennsylvania, where he graduated in medicine, with high honors, in 1847. As his father's partner, he practiced in Madison, Ind., for some time, but subsequently removed to Cincinnati, Ohio. Here he became deeply interested in Homœopathy, and with that freedom from prejudice which characterized him in every relation of life, he resolved to give a fair trial to the new remedies in the treatment of Asiatic cholera, which was then raging. Surprised and delighted with his success, he devoted himself earnestly to the study of the New School, which he was destined to adorn so brilliantly. This period of Dr. Holcombe's life was indeed an eventful one. In Cincinnati he became a convert to the doctrines of Swedenborg, the truth and beauty of which he exemplified in a long life of Christian charity and usefulness. Here, too, he met and married Miss Rebecca Palmer, his faithful and devoted companion through forty-one years of wedded happiness. In 1852 he removed to Natchez, Miss., where, in conjunction with his partner, Dr. Davis, he achieved such distinguished success in the treatment of yellow fever that they were appointed physicians and surgeons to the Mississippi State Hospital. In Natchez Dr. Holcombe suffered the loss of two of his children, a bereavement which inspired his first religious work,

"Our Children in Heaven," characterized by an eminent critic as "the work of genius, sanctified by sorrow."

Some years of Dr. Holcombe's life were spent in Waterproof, La., where he witnessed the outbreak of that struggle between the States, in which his heart bled for the sufferings of his beloved South. Although by inheritance and conviction an ardent opponent of slavery the doctor was a firm believer in the doctrine of States Rights—a doctrine founded, he declared, on that bedrock of civil liberty, the Constitution of the United States. In 1864 he removed with his family to New Orleans, where he speedily achieved a prominent position by his learning, ability and scientific skill. In this community, for thirty years, the doctor was a familiar figure, tall and commanding in presence, but with all the sweetness and suavity of manner that spring from a truly Christian heart. He went about literally doing good—ever ready to assist, to console, to bless. The poor, the needy were always welcome at his door; he gave "without stint and without measure," asking no reward, only striving to do his Master's will. He bore with modesty the well-merited professional honors that fell to his lot. As President of the American Institute of Homœopathy in 1875; as member of the Southern Homœopathic Medical Association; above all, as chairman of the Homœopathic Yellow Fever Commission in 1878, he acquitted himself with distinguished ability. Of the report presented on that occasion by him to Congress, the eminent Dr. Orme, of Atlanta, says, in the *Medical Century:* "The array of incontrovertible statistics, so fully marshalled in that report, has never been contested, and stands as a monument at the same time

to the author and to the system he loved so well and did so much to advance."

Dr. Holcombe was an able and graceful writer; the melody of his verse, the lucidity and brilliancy of his prose, placed him in the foremost ranks of Southern litterateurs. Besides "Our Children in Heaven," mentioned above, he was the author of "The Scientific Basis of Homœopathy," "Essays on the Spiritual Philosophy of African Slavery," "The Sexes Here and Hereafter," "The Other Life," "In Both Worlds," "The Lost Truths of Christianity," "Poems," "Southern Voices," "The End of the World," "The New Life," "Helps to Spiritual Growth," "Condensed Thoughts on Christian Science," "A Mystery of New Orleans."

Of the last named novel Dr. Garth Wilkinson, of London, says: "Dr. Holcombe has given us a masterpiece of fiction. This book is an achievement for the English-speaking peoples, and sooner or later must go round the world." The last literary effort of his life was in defense of the science he loved so well, a pamphlet, entitled "The Truth About Homœopathy," completed only a few days before his death. The doctor was for years one of the editors of the *North American Journal of Homœopathy*, to which he contributed many valuable articles; he also wrote numerous medical brochures.

In the fullness of intellectual vigor, in the active exercise of professional and social duties, Dr. Holcombe was suddenly and without warning called away from those who loved and revered him, to continue his career of noble usefulness in a higher sphere. He died on Tuesday morning, November 28th, 1893, at the residence of his son-in-law, Dr. Gayle-Aiken. His widow and

daughter—his only child—survive him. The doctor often said: "There is no death," and the bright legacy of faith and hope he left behind must be their truest consolation.

The next day, November 29th, he was laid to rest in the beautiful Metairie cemetery, where the sheen of the magnolia, the fragrance of the orange blossom, the glad pæan of the mocking bird enshrine the tomb where sleeps his poet's heart.

To quote once more from Dr. Orme's graceful obituary notice of his deceased colleague:

"To live honorably and usefully and die bravely is the most and best that man can do, and so our friend, the tender, true and noble friend, has gone to try the realities of that 'future life' of which he thought and wrote so much, about which we all wonder so much and know so little. No cannon boomed over his grave, for he stormed no cities, he slaughtered no thousands of fellow-beings; but his is that better, dearer, loftier tribute, the tribute of sincere regret and genuine tears at the loss of a loved and valued citizen, physician and friend."

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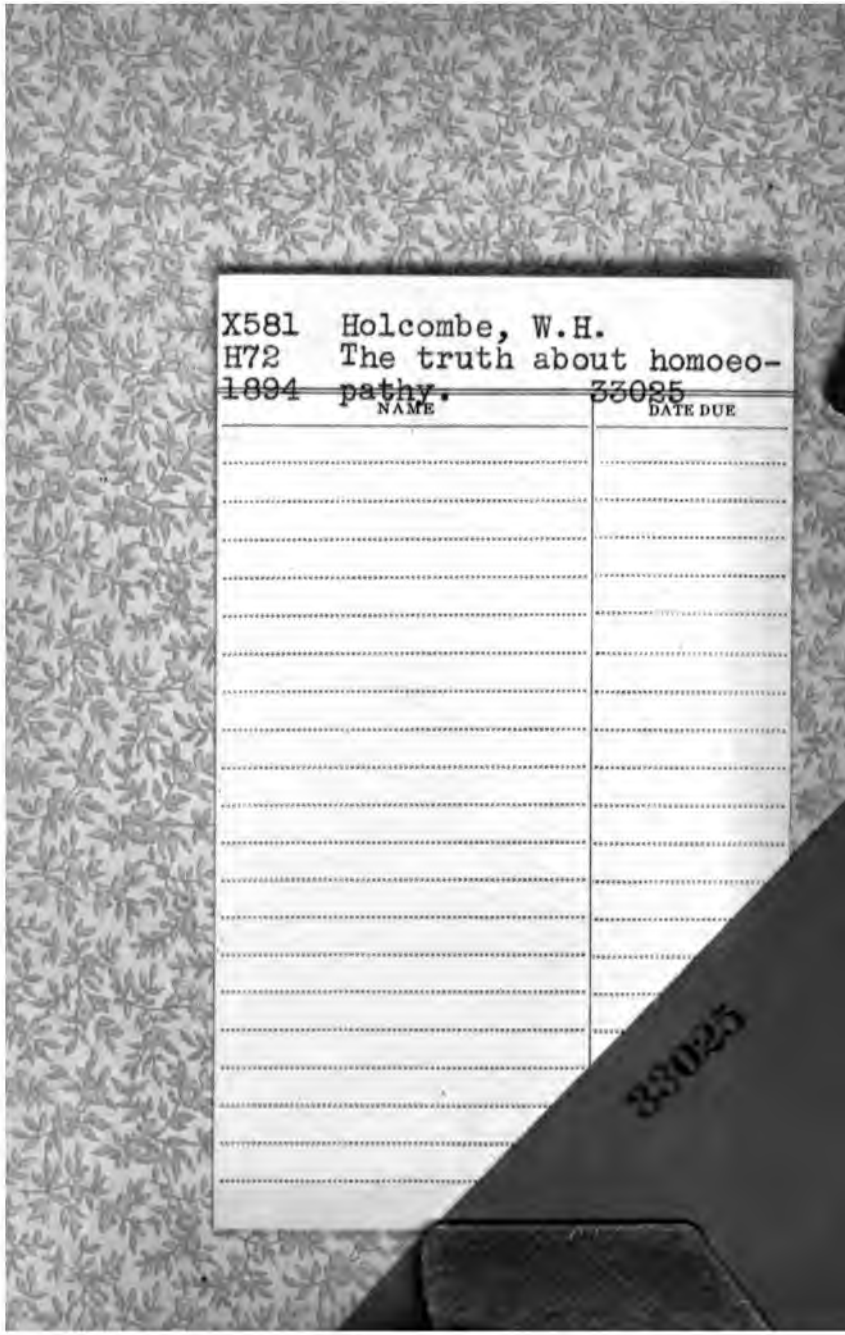
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